



What's Growing On?

The newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc.

Spring, 2005

Spotlight on...

International Master Gardener Conference

It's been ten years since the Saskatchewan Master Gardeners and the University of Saskatchewan hosted the International Master Gardener Conference, and this year the conference returns to Saskatoon to celebrate 100 Years of Gardening on the Canadian Prairies.

Master Gardeners from all parts of North America will be gathering for the conference which is being held from Sunday, July 24 to Wednesday, July 27. A four-day pre-conference tour of the boreal forest is also scheduled, as well as a six-day post-conference tour of the Canadian Rockies.

Keynote speakers include David Tarrant who will be providing A Global Look at Gardens, and horticultural photographer David Cavagnaro whose presentation, Gardeners' Legacy: A Heritage of Plants will deal with heirloom plants.

The three-day conference is packed with tours, workshops and educational sessions, including one given by MGOI Zone 8 Director Fleurette Huneault whose lecture topic, Lawn Gone offers ecologically friendly approaches to front yard

landscaping.

The many themed tours being arranged include everything from lilies and native plants to horticultural therapy and even a Prairie Zen tour! Educational workshops offer a world of topics from native orchids of Saskatchewan to botanical printing, gardening for cats and sacred places in the landscape.

If that's not enough, the trade show and exhibition features the arts and crafts of talented local artisans, all on a gardening theme. A selection of horticultural books will also be available for sale.

An important element of the conference is the Search for Excellence Awards which honour the outstanding contributions of Master Gardeners to their communities. Projects must fit within one of seven categories: youth programs, demonstration garden, workshop or presentation or hands-on programs, community service, innovative projects, special audiences (e.g. senior, disabled, hort therapy), and finally, "other or general MG accomplishment".

The deadline for early bird registration is April 30. Call 306/966-5539 to register. Full details, including accommodation, are available online at www.mastergardener2005.usask.ca or by calling 306/966-5546.



Executive notes

... by Mary Beverley-Burton

Fundraising for Education

My own private name for MGOI is the "New MGOI" – there's lots of exciting stuff happening.

On the education front, we are applying to the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) for a grant to support our initiatives to develop courses with the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture that would provide an alternative for our MGITs to the computer-based courses offered by the University of Guelph.

Our application for \$150,000 is under the firm and expert guidance of Carol Dunk who has pointed out that the OTF appraisals committee will want to know what steps Master Gardeners are taking to raise our own funds for this new program. In addition to allocating the expected profit from the Niagara Flower and Garden Show to this educational program, I would like to see support from *every* MG group in Ontario. Therefore, I am suggesting that we dedicate 2005 as our fundraising year. If each of our 40 groups could raise \$200, we would have \$8,000 for the fund. In reality let's say, "Raise what you can." I realise our groups come in all different sizes so I do not want to cast an amount in stone.

So, this is my *clarion call* to you, the Master Gardeners of Ontario. The MGOI education committee is now working with Liz Klose, Director of Education at the Niagara School of Horticulture, and we hope to have a viable start to the MG training in place by the end of the year. The staff

at both the School of Horticulture and the Niagara Parks Commission are thrilled to be collaborating with MGOI in this initiative. It is indeed a win-win situation for both organizations. As part of the study program, we will explore the possibilities of including hands-on learning as well as serious in-depth science. I find this whole initiative very challenging and exciting.

Until the new educational program is ready (hopefully by the end of the year), MGITs who join after 2004 will have the option of taking the exemption exam or of enrolling in the new computer-based courses offered by the University of Guelph, which are no longer available to us at discounted fees.

Meanwhile, I urge groups with MGITs to provide some small hands-on clinics – plant

propagation and pruning for example. Try some guided tours to places of local interest and encourage your qualified MGs to provide guidance too.

Niagara Flower and Garden Show a Biennial Event

The Niagara Flower and Garden Show is another mega-adventure which has now been approved by the board. The show will occur every two years starting in 2006. Dare to imagine that, in a few years, we can develop a show to (maybe) rival Chelsea. What was that song from South Pacific? You Gotta Have a Dream...

Zoning in

... news from our 11 zones

Zone 6

Lake Simcoe South MG Ken Smith recently gave a fascinating

Meet Wendy Chrystian MGOI Provincial Administrator

As administrator for the province since 1999, Wendy Chrystian works with group co-ordinators to answer their needs. In addition, she provides administrative support for the MGOI board of directors. "I generally know everyone by name and it is rewarding to finally meet MGs in person at events!" she says.

Wendy joined the Niagara group in 1998, and was co-ordinator for several years before working on the debut of the Niagara Flower and Garden Show in 2004. "Now I look forward to doing the same for MGOI as the convenor of the 2006 show," says Wendy.

Ten years ago, Wendy left a 25-year career in museum studies to pursue another love – horticulture. Together with husband Bob she began Garden Strategies (www.gardenstrategies.com), a landscape company located in Niagara. Wendy gardens in Grimsby, and at the moment her greatest plant "loves" are an *Abeliophyllum Distichum* (white forsythia) "it smells like heaven when it comes into bloom so early in spring" and a beautiful 'Ukigomo' ('Floating Clouds') Japanese maple with white leaves tinged with pink. Her one regret is that her business leaves her with little time to putter in the garden!



presentation at a recent MG meeting on his hobby, vermiculture. If you would like to learn about composting with worms, pay a visit to these websites: City Farmer at www.cityfarmer.org/wormcomp61.html and the Worm Lady at www.wormlady.com.

The Oakville MGs got off to a good start and now have 15 members and counting. Most MGITs met the December 31 deadline for the University of Guelph courses but those who have joined in 2005 are contributing their volunteer hours and looking forward to the new courses.

Zone 8

Lanark County MGs Diana Jackson, Helen Halpenny and Joan Tosh have designed, developed and maintained a garden at the very popular Mill of Kintail Conservation Area. This year, they are planning hands-on training sessions to demonstrate various gardening techniques.

The Ottawa-Carleton MGs are planning a workshop on garden design to be held on Saturday, April 9. The morning will be devoted to lectures and slide presentations and the afternoon will feature a hands-on session for participants who can work on their own designs under the supervision of local Master Gardeners.

Zone 9

Peterborough MG Gary Westlake has recently been appointed as Zone 9 Director. Congratulations Gary, and many thanks to Beryl Harris who previously held this position.

News to use

... tips for Master Gardeners

MG Clothing at Canada Blooms

McGuire Uniforms, a major supplier to the green industry that has supplied clothing to the Kitchener and Mississauga MG groups, has been selected by MGOI to supply clothing embroidered with the MG logo. Samples will be available at Canada Blooms and a catalogue and price list will be sent to all MG groups. MGs can select from the most popular items, or from the full McGuire catalogue.

Meeting Organization

The newly formed Oakville group is organizing meetings so that the speaker, a gardening news exchange and support for MGITs comes before group business. So far, so good!

InfoLine Options

Looking for alternatives to running an InfoLine? The Oakville MGs have secured a commitment from a local newspaper to run a gardening column, and MGs will offer answers to questions sent by email from the community.

Guidelines for Allotments

The Ottawa-Carleton group is working with the Food Security Council of Ottawa on developing a learning program for allotment gardeners. What a great idea!

Pesticides Registration Update

A supplement to *Nursery-Landscape Plant Production and IPM* is ready for distribution. The four-page supplement updates pesticide registration changes since the last printed edition in 2003. To order this free publication, call 1-877/424-1300

Tributes

... activities & achievements

Lake Simcoe MGs Emeritus

Lake Simcoe South MG Joyce Cathcart was awarded emeritus status in November. She joins MG Emeritus, Audrey Whitcombe.

Celebrating 15 Years

Congratulations to Lanark County MGs Helen Halpenny, Margaret Inwood, Amy Porkony and Joan Tosh who have achieved 15 years of service.

London-Middlesex Awards

This year, Donna Hickmott and Eve Norman Vestergaard will achieve 20 years of service. Elmer Jorgensen and Bill Shuter have been awarded 15-year pins.

Toronto Service Awards

A 15-year service award goes to veteran MG Mary Mordy. Mary Mershei and Sonia Leslie celebrate 10 years as Toronto MGs. Five-year service award pins go to Lorraine Flanigan, Catherine Peer, Lucy Van Wyk and Ellen Farrelly.

Condolences for Jean Bedford

Regretfully, Ottawa-Carleton MG Jean Bedford passed away in November, 2004. Jean was responsible for developing MG guidelines for working with schools.

On the wires

... the electronic MG

Gardening articles on the 'Net

The Peterborough MGs are writing weekly articles for the *Peterborough Examiner* which will also be posted on the MG website at www.peterboroughmg.ca

Calendar

... upcoming events

March 9 to 13

Canada Blooms

Canada Blooms welcomes you to the greatest Garden Party ever. The Toronto Flower & Garden Show takes place in the South Building of the Metro Convention Centre. Master Gardeners from all over the province will be taking part in gardening clinics throughout the show. Don't forget to pick up the Canada Blooms Magazine and show guide – it's packed with great information! Tickets and information are available at www.canadablooms.com.

March 25 to 28

Ottawa Home & Garden Show

Ottawa-Carleton MGs will be on-hand to speak and provide gardening advice at the Ottawa Home and Garden Show. For more information, visit www.ottawahomeshows.com.

April 15, 16

For the Love of Gardening

Sponsored by the Peterborough Horticultural

Society and the Peterborough and Area Master Gardeners, the For the Love of Gardening show will take place from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Show information, including a complete list of vendors, can be found at www.peterboroughmg.ca.

April 21

Think Spring

Muskoka-Parry Sound MGs are thinking spring with a tenth anniversary fundraiser that sees the return of Mark Cullen who spoke at the event when it was first held in 1995. At this year's lecture, Mark Cullen will be talking about Ten Lessons I've Learned From My Garden. He will also be on hand to sign copies of his books. The event will be held at 7:30 p.m. at Faith Baptist Church, West Rd., Huntsville. Call 705/767-3987 to order tickets (\$10 each).

April 23

Kanata Lawn and Garden Show

Lanark County MG Judy Wall will be speaking about xeriscape gardening at the Kanata Lawn and Garden Show. For more information, visit www.kanatalawnandgardenshow.com.

May 21

Plant Sale

If you're visiting Prince Edward County during the Victoria Day weekend, pull into the Giant Tiger parking lot on Picton's Main Street where Prince Edward County MGs will be setting up their plant sale on Saturday, May 21 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The sale features perennials (and some annuals) selected for outstanding beauty, performance and regional suitability.

July 24 to 27

International MG Conference Saskatoon, SK

Plan to attend this international event which features keynote speakers David Tarrant who takes a global look at gardens, and David Cavagnaro who will be making a presentation on heirloom plants. Details, including a complete conference guide and registration, are available at www.mastergardener2005.usask.ca.

September 24

Niagara Technical Update

The Niagara MG group is hosting a full day Technical Update open to all Ontario MGs at the Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens and School of Horticulture. The day features two speaker sessions, an interactive Q&A session and tours of the Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens and Butterfly Conservatory given by parks superintendent, Tom Laviolette. Activities also include an educational, behind-the-scenes tour of the butterfly conservatory and a "gotta have it" plant sale organized by the students of the school of horticulture. For information or to reserve now, contact June Streadwick at 905/934-6137 or by email at streadwick@sympatico.ca.

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What's Growing On? is published four times a year for Master Gardeners in Ontario. To submit news about your Master Gardener group, contact Lorraine Flanigan, editor at gardenmart@sympatico.ca.